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T I M E.

TIME is the life of God. We speak of eternity as if it were something contradistinguished from time; but it is merely a term to express our inability to imagine a beginning or an end to time. We cannot indeed imagine time as otherwise than eternal. Sublime thought! and sublime also in no small degree is our connection with it, even limiting our consideration of that connection to the present form of our existence. We can look but a little way forwards or backwards, and find even in that restricted range of vision much obscurity and doubt. Yet how grand to be able to extend in any degree whatever our notion of merely passing time—that in which we happen to live! It is like extending our very life itself. Upon this depends most of the pleasure which men have in historical or antiquarian research, and also in the investigations of geology, which may be called the antiquarianism of the pre-human world. The animal knows and can learn nothing of such things. The ignorant man, who lives only for the day, and in the day, is in the like predicament. It is the privilege of the studious and reflecting man of an advanced civilisation to know them, and to feel how greatly they exalt and expand his terrestrial being.

A zealous scientific inquiry into the past is of such modern date that our retrospect cannot as yet be considered as very clear or precise. It would be rash to lay great stress upon any of its deductions. It is interesting, however, to find that the general tendency of the research is to shew mundane things as of much longer endurance than was formerly supposed. Geology has already seen at an end all objections to the vast chronology which it seeks to establish for the world before man became its ruling inhabitant. Each of its many formations represents an enormous portion of time. Take that of the coal strata alone. If it be true, as most geologists now believe, that each bed of coal is only the last form of a bed of moss—that is, a decayed forest—how great must be the space of time involved in the production of the entire coal series, which in many places is composed of scores of such beds! Look again to the phenomena of disintegration, or the wearing away of rocks. The forming of a cliff by the beating of the waves is a process which we may well see, from the slowness of the operation before our eyes, to involve a great space of time. The wearing back of the Niagara fall from Queenstown to its present position has been estimated as requiring not less than twenty thousand years. Yet these are but the operations of the yesterday of geology. They are only the minutes of its day. And as the science goes on, more and more of such minutes are continually being found,

and inserted in the ever-increasing round. Well may the geologists talk of millions of years as involved in the history of that mere crust of the earth with which they deal!

To a perfectly corresponding purport is the voice of historical research. The commencement of the Egyptian monarchy, and consequently of a system of civilisation in that country, is now taken back many centuries before its former date. Some speak of nearly four thousand years before Christ, and none speak of fewer than four-and-thirty centuries. This is the result of an inquiry into hieroglyphical memorials. But that is not the only means by which we may supply the defect of expressly-written records. The scientific antiquary has dug into the earth for a chronicle of unlettered man, resembling that which geology supplies regarding the lower animals. He finds that all round the coasts of Europe, where civilised nations now dwell, there existed nations for a long series of ages prior to their getting either pens to write or iron wherewith to form implements of offence or of utility. Some came sooner to the use of these articles than others; it is, however, not less than three thousand years since, in some of them, that change took place. Now, in all of these countries there was a period when men, knowing not iron, made use of bronze (an alloy of copper) as a material for such implements. They could *found*, not *inlegantly*, but they only employed a comparatively unsuitable metal which chanced to occur in a form much more suggestive of its useful qualities than iron. This Bronze Age was one of long duration, though till lately its very existence was unknown. It is a chapter which we have to add to the written history of all European nations; but it is not the only one. Previous to this age, which was one involving some refinement, at least as far as that may be inferred from the state of the arts, there was a ruder one—a lower and earlier formation, as it were—a still older palæontology of the human race. The European nations could then only fashion arrow-heads and war-hammers, knives and chisels, implements for war, the chase, and domestic convenience, as well as ornaments for their persons, out of stone—the pebbles and flints which lay beneath their feet, and the first and readiest of all available materials. The series of events is most natural—the simplest labour and rudest expedients first; next something significant of an improved ingenuity and reflection. But what we have here to do with is the great and almost indefinite extension of human history by such means. The oldest of civilised nations appear to have had to pass through these prior stages, each expressing a long period. As

to Egypt, in particular, the memorials of a Stone Period are traced in the knives of obsidian, and other mineral implements, which, with the characteristic perseverance of religious usages, continued to be employed in embalming after better implements had been obtained for other purposes. Now, add to Egyptian history first a Bronze Period, and then a Stone Period, and it must be seen that we take back the actual commencement of the business of humanity in that region to a point earlier than the most fabulous historians could have ventured to dream of. It is as likely to be ten thousand years ago as five or six. And, after all, was this the oldest group of people describable as a nation? That the human race has lived longer on the earth than even the last-mentioned sum would indicate is manifest from other considerations—as, for example, the slowness of the process of modification by which various sections of the human family become distinguished from one another. If all men have come from one centre and one type, the space of time which would be required for enabling them to put on those peculiarities of figure, style of visage, and, above all, complexion, which we see they have retained with so little change throughout our thirty or five-and-thirty historical centuries, must have been immense. On such a point we can only go by vague impressions; but it does not appear very irrational to suppose that two hundred centuries may have elapsed—if not more than even that—since first the Maker of man placed him upon the earth.

When the results of scientific research are presented in even this imperfect form, if they only suffice to extend the reader's ideas of the duration of this mundane frame of things, they will surely be admitted to make good our starting proposition. It was at first thought ill of that the world was represented as being older than six thousand years; but now that we have learned to think of it as so much older, how poor does the former idea appear! We must all feel that an ancient world is most correspondent to the Ancient of Days, by whom it was created.

While our contemplative connection with Time is made so grand by our sense of the antiquity of things, it must be admitted with a sigh that our actual or practical connection with it—still limiting our considerations to the present form of our being—is in some measure rendered disheartening by the same cause. When we think of humanity alone having lasted so long, and only advanced as yet to the point which we see, we become painfully aware of how small significance and efficacy is a generation of our race. The life of man was always seen to be a short-lived flower; but now it becomes proportionably much more so than ever. The most ardent seekers of reform and improvement are thus taught how little they can expect to accomplish in a lifetime, and how little of the results of their endeavours they can hope to look upon with earthly eyes. They take up the cause from others, and to others it must be resigned. This has always been, to a certain extent, known and admitted, and it involves some elevated views of human nature; for is there not something sublime in this zeal of working for results by which others are to benefit? To continue diligent in such working, when even more sensible of the shortness of individual life in proportion to the great movements of humanity, is so much the more grand. Not that men can justly be said to work on such a disinterested principle; but we know that in the very passions they obey in their efforts to advance in that indefinite improbability which forms the great distinguishing feature of our race, and which has so often been misdescribed as perfectibility, they are under the guidance of an Almighty Will which has arranged our destinies. Clearer knowledge as to the duration of time will never greatly alter the dispositions implanted in man. The individual coral polype works for the building up of

the great fabric which it requires myriads of creatures like itself to complete. Man works in the same way with respect to the great ends appointed for his race by the Creator, whether knowing much or little of the proportion which his single handiwork bears to the great design.

Perhaps there is an error in our ordinary way of contemplating human life. The egotism of man makes the seventy years' span of the individual appear as of the first consequence, and he naturally deprecates the brevity of the period, as with it begins and ends his concern with this world. But the succession of generations is a determinate arrangement attending organised things, for which there must have been powerful reasons in the councils of Omnipotence: continual renewal, it may be surmised, is necessary for the preservation of that portion of nature in a right and efficient condition. The single life appears on this view as an unimportant accident in the case. It might be more just to contemplate the life of a species, or even the life of all the species that were from first to last to occupy any particular planet—an idea at which we may well arrive after seeing it so amply demonstrated by modern science—had such instruction not been afforded through another channel—that both our own species had a beginning, and there was a time (much earlier) when this globe sustained no sort of living thing. Undoubtedly, if we remove our contemplation from the generation to the tribe or species, and think of each of these as one existence, and see how long that existence comparatively is, we must admit that the frail creatures tenanted the earth come into a more respectable relation to time than might have previously occurred to our minds.

While we may be allowed to indulge in such speculations—granting they be entitled to no better name—it is very certain, on the other hand, that man's chief business, as far as his present form of being is concerned, is with the term of individual existence. Let him stretch his soul backward into the farthest past, or forward into the remotest future, still to this little space on the Great Circle his thoughts must come home. Here really dwell his Interests and his Duties. Here must he approve himself a faithful servant of the great Master, if ever. It is most interesting to contemplate, as far as such a thing can be made objective, man going through this little space of time, busy with a thousand matters which seem to him of vast consequence, while viewed in relation to the whole of time they would sink into inappreciable trifles—overlooking all this their character in the grand relation, and rightly doing so, since otherwise the business of the world—the interests of the race at large—would be misconducted. Small, indeed, are the concerns of many: the tilling of an acre, the attending to some small part of a machine, doing some little piece of service to a superior, repeated in its trivial details every blessed day till the end; and yet how fitting and well that such little matters are not merely accomplished, but accomplished often with a gusto and a spirit that redeems them from commonplace! The humble creature feels as if he were doing great things for himself; and is he not really doing so, when he is clearly taking the part assigned by his capacity and the accidents of his birth in the great plan which God has willed? There are also touching views of time as regards the individual. It brings him domestic changes, many of them sorrowful. Sometimes he has a grief which he thinks can never be cured: Time lays on his soothing hand, and the wound closes. He cherishes a memory, and seeks to give it immortality: the stone, though outlasting the feeling, forgets its tale in twenty years, and no one can then say for what it was raised. And yet who would wish to assure a fellow-creature in the first burst of a righteous grief, that in a few months or years it would be forgotten?—or who would think of interposing to prevent that vain

effort to commemorate one who is solely distinguished in the eyes of affection? Times without number has the grief been felt and the affectionate recollection expressed, and yet it is but in the few recent cases that anything has been preserved. When the mourners themselves have disappeared, who are to keep alive the loss and the grief? What a grave of once-felt woes and heart-breakings is the past! Still it is part of nature that these things should be; and God, we may be assured, looks with compassion on distresses of which he knows the evanescence, and which by and by none but himself will remember to have ever existed.

TALES OF THE COAST-GUARD.

THE SMUGGLERS' HOSTAGE.

ONLY one of the seamen wounded in the brush with the smugglers previously narrated recovered.* The other, James Norton, having been hit grievously on the left knee-cap, it was found necessary to take off the leg, and the poor fellow sank under the operation. The most energetic measures were, it may be supposed, immediately adopted to bring the guilty parties to justice. The government offered a large reward to any one—excepting, of course, those who fired the fatal shots—that would give information leading to the conviction of the offenders, and an active inquiry was at once set on foot, and vigorously carried on throughout the neighbourhood. The result was the apprehension of a number of persons to whom suspicion pointed, and the ultimate committal of five of them to the Winchester March asize on the capital charge. It was, however, very doubtful that we had secured one of the chief culprits. There was no evidence that the men in prison were owners of the goods attempted to be run, were armed at the time, or in any way concerned in the affair, save as temporary helpers; and even on this last point the proof with regard to two or three of them was by no means clear. From the blood-tracks leading to a considerable distance, discovered the morning after the affray, it was certain that the hurried and random shots of the seamen must have taken severe effect upon several of the fugitive contrabandists, but not one of these wounded men could be found; and it was greatly feared that the deaths of the two men would remain unavenged. Once during the preliminary investigation I thought we had a chance of letting daylight in upon the confused and foggy business. I was called out of the justice-room at Hamble, where the depositions were being taken before several of the county magistrates, to see a woman who said she had an important communication to make to me in private. This woman, a slightly person, with a clear, healthy, open English look, though now overcast with bitter grief, I had frequently seen before, and knew her to be the wife of one of the prisoners, Richard White by name, the youngest, and, as I thought, the least implicated of them all. They kept, I knew, a chandler's shop at Hythe, on the south shore of the Southampton River, and just on the skirts of the New Forest. But for one or two self-betraying words dropped in the flurry caused by his sudden apprehension, there was really nothing against him except that he had been seen in close, covert discourse with two of the other prisoners on the evening the unfortunate collision took place. His wife, I found, had been terribly scared by a remark of one of the magistrates, and the instant we were alone, she asked me with a hysterical whimper, if I really thought they would hang Richard.

'There cannot be two opinions about it,' I promptly replied, desirous of deepening the impression made upon her. 'In fact, morally speaking, I look upon him as half-hanged already.'

'Oh dear!—oh dear!' sobbed the woman. 'What, for mercy's sake, is to be done? Suppose,' she added hesitatingly—'suppose Richard to be willing, would he, do you think, be allowed to turn king's evidence?'

'He knows, then, who the rascals in chief are, where they are to be found, and'—

'I did not say that,' she hastily interrupted. 'I did not say that: I only meant supposing—suppose Richard'—

'Oh, never mind supposing!—don't think to bamboozle me with supposes!' I sharply rejoined. 'Persuade your husband to make a clean breast of it whilst there is yet time—if indeed it be not already too late,' I added, as the door of the justice-room opened, and the prisoners, handcuffed and strongly guarded, came out—for both he and his companions are, I suppose, fully committed for trial.'

The wife screamed violently at the sight of her manacled husband—a youngish, meek-faced chap, looking as if butter would scarcely melt in his mouth—and endeavoured to embrace him, but was roughly pushed back by the constables. The examination, I found, had been adjourned till the next day, when the prisoners would be again brought up for the formal completion of the depositions.

Mrs White again approached me, as, after a few minutes' conference with the magistrates, I was leaving the place. She was yet paler than before, but had ceased whimpering; and there was a feverish light in her eyes which I thought indicated that she had taken a resolution, though seemingly a painful one.

'I worked, sir, as you are aware, many years for Miss Warneford before I married,' began the woman; 'and as she knows me to be honest and trustworthy, I thought perhaps you might be willing to help us through this trouble?'

'There is nothing like helping one's self, Mrs White, depend upon it,' I answered, 'in this as in every other trouble. Your husband can steer clear of the gallows without my assistance.'

'Are you sure, sir, that if Richard could point out where the men who shot Batley and Norton are to be found, he would himself get clear?'

'There cannot be a doubt about it, and pocket the reward into the bargain.'

'No—no. God forbid! We'll have no reward—no blood-money!' she added with a shuddering whisper; 'not if it was the Indies of gold! We'll sell all, and leave this part of the country. When can I see Richard?' she resumed after a brief silence—'see him alone, away from the evil companions who have brought this shame upon him. I can persuade him, I know, to save his own life and mine.' Without further preface I conducted her to the solicitor for the prosecution, and it was arranged that she should have an interview with her husband early on the following morning previous to the final examination of the prisoners.

I was early in attendance at the temporary court-house the next day, where I found Mrs White sitting alone in a small waiting-room in a state of fevered yet dumb anxiety and fear. It was already whispered that her husband was to be admitted evidence for the crown, and the wife had sought the concealment and refuge of the anteroom from the scowling looks and muttered threats of the numerous groups of people waiting outside for the appearance of the prisoners. It was clear to me that she herself wavered in purpose and resolution, and, but for the belief instilled into her that there was no other mode of saving her husband from the gallows, would at once have retracted the solicitations to which it was understood he had reluctantly yielded. The moral code of the amphibious inhabitants of the coast did not, it must be borne in mind, affix any very deep stain upon the act of shooting the two seamen. It was done, according to them, in hot blood and self-defence, and though to

be regretted for the victims' sake, was by no means to be looked upon in the light of a common or deliberate murder. This state of opinion of course branded the expected betrayal of his comrades by Richard White as a dastardly crime of the blackest dye; and when he was brought up, a yell of execration burst forth which completely unnerved him, and I greatly feared that the necessary disclosures would not be made. As he was passing the door of the waiting-room where his wife sat cowering with shame and terror, he stepped eagerly towards her, seized her almost fiercely by the hands, and exclaimed in a shaking voice: 'I cannot do it, Martha—I can't, and I won't.' The poor woman burst into tears, and with a choking voice, as she clung round his neck, urged him, though falteringly, to save his own life—hers—that of their child. The pleadings of the wife and mother were again successful—the more easily, perhaps, that the hootings of the mob had ceased, or at all events could not be heard where he then stood. The prisoner was immediately conducted before the magistrates, and I went in at the same time. The chairman briefly assured him that if he should be the means of bringing the men who actually slew Batley and Norton to justice, there could be no doubt the king's pardon would be extended to him. White trembled very much while thus addressed, and his changing countenance plainly shewed how violent were the conflicting impulses by which he was alternately swayed and dominated. At last he spoke, but the first faint, husky words were interrupted by the vehement yet indistinct cry of a woman; and then his wife burst into the room, wildly exclaiming: 'No, no, Richard—don't—not a word, for God's sake—not a word!' The apparently frantic woman, before any one could interfere, reached, threw her arms round her husband, and whispered something, with rapid and smothered accents, in his ear, which it was immediately plain would deprive us of our witness. The woman's inflamed, disordered aspect was perfectly maniacal; and the moment she saw that White comprehended her meaning, away she flew out of the room with the same wild hurry she had exhibited on entering. The suddenness of the thing took everybody completely by surprise, and excused the fault of the constables in permitting her to approach the prisoner. After the lapse of a few minutes White was again asked if he had any statement to make: 'Only,' he doggedly answered, 'what I've said afore—that I am innocent of the sailors being shot, and mortal sorry for it too!' Nothing further could be got out of him. The angry and menacing warning of the chairman produced no impression; and finding both threats and expostulations useless, White was finally committed with the other prisoners, to take their trials at the Hampshire assize on the charge of wilful murder. The woman's extraordinary behaviour had been caused, it was conjectured, by a communication made to her by a seafaring man a minute or two after her husband had gone into the justice-room. She had instantly, on leaving the court-house, taken boat for Hythe.

Weeks wore away, and the month of January had arrived without bringing any additional fact to light in connection with the affair. In the meantime I had been zealous and active in my vocation, but although tolerably successful, not nearly so much so as I conceived the many sources of private information I had in various ways contrived to obtain, the carefully arranged and boldly-executed schemes I had devised, and the perseverance with which I followed them up, entitled me to expect. The smuggling fraternity proved keener hands than I had judged them to be, not unfrequently taking the wind suddenly out of my sails when upon the most ingeniously-contrived tack, and at the very moment I was hugging myself upon assured success. This remarkable sagacity in penetrating my designs, when just on the eve of fulfilment, gave rise to numberless hazy suspicions which I was exceedingly

anxious to clear up, and it was not long before a very unexpected and remarkable opportunity of doing so occurred.

I was fond of wild-fowl shooting, and occasionally used to amuse myself with a duck-gun upon the Southampton Water, chiefly off Marchwood and Millbrook, up towards Redbridge, where tolerable sport was frequently to be found. One afternoon, when thus engaged, accompanied by one of the cutter's crew, in a small hired boat, it suddenly came on about half-past three to snow furiously. I had gone rather high up the river, and as the tide was flowing, the pull back to Southampton in such bitter and blinding weather was an unpleasant and laborious one. I took an oar just to keep myself from freezing, and we had reached off Cracknor Hard, near Marchwood, when I caught sight of a large boat, whose character and present occupation could not be mistaken. She was about to creep up, as it is called, a number of tubs sunk there under adverse circumstances perhaps, or in order to their being fished up and secured at the first favourable opportunity. There could be no doubt with respect to the business in hand, as I could distinctly see two men, about two hundred yards apart on the shore, waving their arms to shape the boat's course to the exact spot where the tubs had been deposited. The mode by which the contraband confederacy manage to place a precise and—the great point—an *invisible* mark, where a boat or larger vessel may find it prudent to sink her cargo, is simple and ingenious enough: two persons on shore, standing two or three hundred yards apart—the boat or vessel being about midway between them—first carefully mark the places on which they stand, and then each of them notes the object on the opposite shore in line with the boat and himself. It is obvious that the two men have but to stand again in the same places, and wave the boat into line with the distant object—to the point, in fact, where the line of sight of both meet and cross, and the exact spot will be ascertained and reached. If there be no opposite shore or distant fixed objects, the operation is more difficult and uncertain, but to clever and practised hands a star will suffice. This process in trigonometry was now going on; and considering that we were near the shore, and almost within call of assistance—that there were but five men in the boat, all probably unarmed, whilst we had a loaded duck-gun and a pair of double-barrelled pistols, which the frequently sudden exigencies of the service had taught me never to be without—and that, moreover, the Nelson school in which I had graduated instructed its pupils not to count adverse odds too curiously, I determined to make one amongst them—two, rather, if the man with me, who had only about a couple of months previously entered on board the *Rose*, should prove worth anything, as of course I supposed he would.

Our two oars were at once unshipped; and first ordering the man to take the gun and lie close in the bow of the boat, I seated myself at the stern, and sculled quietly stem on towards the smuggler. The atmosphere was so thick with the driving snow and fast-falling darkness, and we glided so noiselessly through the water, that I nothing doubted of closing unobserved with the busy and preoccupied smuggler, when that rascal Rawlings jumped suddenly to his feet, exclaiming in a loud voice: 'They have mizzled, sir; let me help pull!' and then seizing an oar without waiting for a reply, he made a circle with it through the air, and let it fall heavily into the row-lock. Sure enough they saw us plainly enough now, and were off in a crack, and at a speed which rendered pursuit both hopeless and absurd. Rawlings, unable to face me, kept his eyes fixed in the direction of the smuggler; and upon reflection I was rather glad he did so, as my first impulsive movement, with the half-formed intention of throwing him overboard, had thereby, I thought, escaped his notice. A

few moments restored my habitual self-restraint, and I said as calmly as I could: 'They are off indeed, and it is quite useless striving to overtake them. Do you take both oars, and pull as quickly as you can to the near steps of Southampton quay.' He did so, and I presently bethought me of discharging the gun, since there was no longer the chance of a shot either at ducks or smugglers. It happened, I could not conceive how, that the mouth of the barrel had become choked with snow, and it consequently burst, about twelve inches down, scattering the fragments in all directions. I was unhurt, but Rawlings uttered a sharp cry of pain, dropped the oars, and clapped his hands to his forehead. A jagged piece of iron had struck him there, and the wound, though I could see not at all a serious one, bled profusely. He either was, however, or pretended to be in great pain, and I determined on landing at Cracknor Hard, and getting the hurt looked to. This was done. A Marchwood practitioner examined the wound, stanching the hemorrhage, and jestingly remarking how fortunate it was the iron had struck so slightly-susceptible a part as the head, pronounced the injury to be unimportant. This opinion the man did not at all coincide with. He still appeared to suffer greatly, and I agreed that he should sleep at the public-house—the only one there—for that night at all events, and if not quite restored, the next also; but to report himself on board on the day following at the latest. This arrangement effected, I walked to Hythe, and there took boat for the *Rose*, then lying about three miles farther down the river, very earnestly employed the while in running up various trifling matters previously logged against Rawlings to a certainly significant though still perplexing sum-total. There was, however, I did not doubt, a good time coming, and that I determined patiently and very watchfully to await.

I had arranged to dine the next day and spend the evening with my sister and a few friends; and accordingly, at about three o'clock in the afternoon, I arrived at Pear-Tree Green. Important news awaited me. Mrs White had been there in a state of great agitation, to request that I would cross over to Hythe as soon as it was dusk, where, on landing, I should be met by a girl in a red shawl, who would conduct me to her. It was necessary, she left word, that I should be alone, and not in uniform, but well armed; and that it would be advisable a strong party of the cutter's men should be ordered to lie within hail off the Hythe landing-place. Fortunately the boat which had brought me to Ichen had not yet proceeded on its return, and I immediately sent for the coxswain, Tom Sawley, a man in whom I had entire confidence, and gave him directions in accordance with Mrs White's suggestions. I then swallowed a hasty dinner, changed my dress, crossed over the ferry, and it being quite dark when I reached the Southampton Quay, at once embarked in a wherry for Hythe. A girl in a red shawl was, I found, waiting on the Hard, and the instant I had landed, she walked smartly away. I followed, and she led on in the direction of Fawley. We had left the village about half a mile behind us, when the girl gradually checked her hitherto rapid pace till I had come up within speaking or rather hearing distance. She then, still continuing her walk, and without looking round, said: 'That whitewashed cottage yonder on the right, Captain Warneford, is the place where Mrs White expects you. Take no notice of me, and walk in without knocking. There may be people watching us now.' The cottage pointed out was about a couple of hundred yards ahead, and there was no other habitation that I could see near it. I walked on as the girl directed, lifted the latch, and there, sure enough, stood Mrs White alone, as pale as a spectre, and shaking with nervous agitation. It was a wretched place, with a clay-floor, and the only articles of furniture visible in the dull light of a penny candle were a crazy three-clawed

round table, two broken rush-bottomed chairs, and a rusty iron fender and poker. This was not, be it understood, Mrs White's home.

'Now, then, Mrs White,' I said after a brief recognition, 'bear a hand, if you please, with whatever communication you intend to favour me with. I trust also,' I added, finding she did not answer so quickly as, in my impatience, I thought she ought to have done, 'that you will keep this time a steady, straightforward course, and not suddenly double and run off when least expected to do so. You know what I mean?'

'I do; and presently I will tell you why I acted so strangely. I have now to inform you that the men who are believed to have killed Batley and Norton are within two miles of this spot. They are four—though one, Tom Etheridge, need care little now for earthly kings or justices. He is dying, if not already dead. They were all wounded by pistol-shots. Three have been for some time recovered, and to-morrow night they quit the Forest, I think, for the Welsh coast, if you permit them to do so.'

'If it depend on me, my good woman, you may be sure that Winchester, not Wales, will be their destination.'

'One of the cutter's men, Sam Rawlings, is a confederate of the smugglers.'

'By Jupiter, I have thought so!' I interrupted. 'The impudent rascal! But never mind, go ahead.'

'The boat which he risked a good deal yesterday, he says, to prevent falling into your hands, is that in which they propose to take their departure, Rawlings with them, who is determined not to trust himself again on the deck of the *Rose*.'

'He is right: but go on—who are the others?'

'The chief of them is Daniel Squibb: you must have heard of him.'

'Frequently, and always as a hardened, reckless ruffian with whom the trade of smuggling is but an occasional, and, compared with others he indulges in, a respectable occupation.'

'That,' said the woman in a low voice and with a perceptible shudder, 'is, I believe, quite true. The others, besides Etheridge, are Harry Withers and William Stokes. You must also know them by name at least.'

'I do. And now what is to hinder us from summoning the men, who no doubt by this time are off the Hard, and securing the fellows—but two miles distant you say—at once?'

'That cannot be,' promptly rejoined the woman in a peremptory tone. 'That cannot be, Lieutenant Warneford. You must first meet those desperate men alone.'

'Alone! You must have lost your senses to propose such a thing!'

'It would be no wonder if I had,' she sadly replied; 'and I have no doubt that I shall do so if you fail me. I cannot think you will: you are known to be a daring man, and in a close hand-to-hand struggle must, I should think, from sheer personal strength, as well as frequent practice, be more than a match for any ruffian, however powerful.'

This very complimentary speech took me thoroughly aback. 'Why, what the deuce, Mrs White,' I cried, 'are you talking about? I am not certainly so likely to faint at the click of a pistol-lock or the flash of a cutlass as a school-girl; still I have by no means the enthusiastic love for close hand-to-hand encounters with desperate men which you appear to suppose.'

'I will explain,' said the agitated woman, 'as briefly as I can. You must recollect my little boy—you have frequently seen him at Miss Warneford's?'

'Ay—a little rosy-cheeked fellow, four or five years of age.'

'Yes,' ejaculated the mother with a spasmodic cry of grief. 'He, the light, and joy, and hope of my life, has been taken from me'—

'Dead!'

'No, no; but worse—far worse I fear, but that I trust in you. You remember the morning my husband was to have told the magistrates where the men whose names I have mentioned might be found?'

'To be sure I do, and the fool's trick you caused him to play us and himself.'

'It was no fault of mine. The rumour that Richard intended to turn king's evidence was—how I know not—in everybody's mouth hours before he had promised me to do so. A minute after my husband entered the justice room with you, a man came to me and whispered that my child had been secured as a hostage, and was at that moment in Squibb's power, who had sworn to kill him should the hiding-place of the ruffians be discovered through my husband's or any other person's information. The villain would, I knew, keep his dreadful word were he certain of being hacked in pieces the next moment for doing so. I hastened home in a state almost of frenzy, to find the terrible statement true. The child had been wiled away, no one I dared question knew by whom, or how, or when. He is still in Daniel Squibb's power, and should they be attacked, the first victim would, I well know, be my child. I have since ministered to their necessities like a slave, in the hope that when they left the place my boy would be restored. Yesterday I was told by Squibb himself that he should, for fear of accidents, take the child away with them; and if he does,' exclaimed the unfortunate creature with a wild bitterness of grief, 'I should never see him more—never, except perhaps at the hulks, or the gallows, for which he would be fitly trained. Save me, Lieutenant Warneford,' cried the frantic woman as she fell on her knees and strove to grasp mine—'save me from that living death: my boy from the horrible fate which must else overtake him. You have faced death a hundred times for mere honour's sake, and will you now shrink back when humanity, compassion, generosity, pleading for a helpless, brokenhearted woman—for the menaced life, far more, the menaced soul, of an innocent child—implore your help?'

This was certainly a very delightful predicament to find one's self suddenly and unexpectedly placed in, and I must say that I was quite as much puzzled and confounded as excited and distressed. Here was a little woman, certainly somewhat, and yet not much above her class, all at once ended with, and breaking into a strain of pathetic and reproachful eloquence for my especial benefit; and for the benevolent purpose, as it seemed—for I as yet hardly comprehended what she was exactly driving at—of inducing me to sacrifice my own life in order to afford her a chance, and a poor one, of saving her son's!

Still the woman's agony of grief affected me, and I said as I raised her up: 'If you can shew me, Mrs White, that there is a fair chance of success, it will be another matter. What is it you propose?'

'This!' she answered with great readiness. 'The girl you saw will go for the men. The instant they arrive you, I, and they will set out together. The sailors must stop at a spot within about three-quarters of a mile of Squibb's and his companions' hiding-place. You and I will go on. I shall enter the place with a message from Rawlings, whom I saw about three hours ago. They are without any light at nights; I can secretly introduce you into the building, and place you in concealment close to Squibb and the child. I will then return for the men. We will approach as silently and swiftly as possible, and when near you will hear this.' She whistled a bar of a popular tune. 'It is their private signal-whistle, and will not alarm them. When the rush takes place, Squibb will endeavour to seize and slay the child; but a brave and powerful man like you will surely be able to shield the boy, even against all three of the ruffians, during the very short time that will elapse before they are completely overpowered?'

'Upon my word, Mrs White,' I said, 'you have sketched a very pretty play, which I have no doubt would go off to the entire satisfaction of everybody except the person you propose honouring with the principal part. Why not let the seamen approach, in the first instance, within call of the fellows' hiding-hole? That would greatly diminish the risk.'

'That would never do,' she said; 'they would certainly be discovered, and the child would be at once massacred out of revenge.' In short, she had such a multiplicity of replies to all I could urge against the scheme, and was so vehement in her entreaties, that seeing that it was not an altogether desperate undertaking, and remembering how anxious the gentry at headquarters were to secure the slayers of the two seamen, which object could not be accomplished without Mrs White's aid, I at last agreed to try the venture.

'You give me your word of honour as a gentleman,' said Mrs White, 'that after I have shewn you where to find Squibb and his comrades you will not attack them in any other mode than that upon which we have agreed?' I gave the required pledge; the girl in the red shawl, furnished with the necessary credentials, started off to summon the men; and the instant they arrived we made silently, in a zig-zag direction, towards Fawley, keeping ourselves as much as possible within the shade of the forest trees. After about twenty minutes' march the men were halted, and Mrs White and I proceeded alone.

She stopped as we were about to emerge into a more open part of the forest. 'Look there!' she whispered. 'You see the farm building in the direction of the light beyond?' I nodded assent. 'It is there the men you seek are sheltered. The farmer to whom it belongs,' added the woman with a meaning smile, 'has never been near it since Squibb happened to find the key in the outer-door, and no one would think of suspecting so very respectable a man of harbouring smugglers. Now, Lieutenant Warneford,' she continued with great seriousness of manner, 'attend to what I say. There is a man always looking out from an upper loft. You see the hedge on the right: crawl along the further side of it, and make cautiously for the gable-end of the building. There is a small door there which I will gently open. A few feet within there is a ladder leading to the place where the men lie, but you will be concealed from them by a number of trusses of hay and straw: the seamen must rush in at the large gates, of which I have got a duplicate key.'

Having thus spoken Mrs White moved swiftly off, leaving me, I must confess, in no very enviable state of mind. Her scheme, ugly enough at first view, did any thing but improve upon more intimate acquaintance, and I had half a mind not to proceed further with it. There were, it seemed, four sturdy ruffians, including the look-out—now for the first time heard of—to contend with; and should I be discovered before the arrival of the seamen, the result could scarcely be problematical. Nevertheless, sustained by the professional contempt of danger in which I had been reared, the knowledge that I possessed remarkable skill with the pistol, and the recollection of many perhaps greater perils successfully overcome, I ventured on, and in about ten minutes found myself close by the door at the gable-end. So far all was well. I could hear a confused murmur of voices within, but nothing distinctly. At last the door gently opened, and Mrs White appeared at the aperture. She was, I saw, ghastly pale and trembling with terror now the moment of trial had come, bravely as she before talked of the business. Her finger was on her lip, and she motioned me to go in. I did so as softly as if I had been treading on eggs. The door closed behind me, and it was black as the inside of a tar-barrel. In a few moments my eyes became better accustomed to the darkness, and perceiving the ladder—a weak,

slight affair—I placed my right foot softly upon one of the lower rungs, which, the instant my weight was fairly upon it, snapped short in the middle with a loud crack. 'What's that?' cried one of the fellows in a fierce voice, apparently a few inches only overhead. 'It's me,' promptly replied Mrs White, who was standing just without the door, listening in terrified silence. 'Do you want me?' 'Not I,' returned the surly savage; 'only mind you don't forget—for I don't like your looks, as I told you—that upon the first alarm I'll blow this young un's head off as sure as my name is Daniel Squibb. I say,' he again called out after a few moments' silence, 'what time did you say Sam Rawlings would be here?'

'About ten o'clock he said,' answered Mrs White. A ground of satisfaction was the only reply. The door again closed, and I, with better fortune than before, noiselessly ascended the crazy ladder. A small corner of the floor, I found on reaching it, was partitioned off from the rest, as Mrs White had stated, by trusses of hay and straw, behind which I crawled, and after a while contrived to get a view of the amiable party to whom I found myself in such dangerous proximity. The moon shone brilliantly in upon them, and I could see their features distinctly. They were all dressed and armed with pistols stuck in their waist-belts. The great brawny figure of Daniel Squibb was stretched upon a heap of straw, covered by some dirty blanketing, and by his side lay a young child—fast asleep, I thought, judging by the natural ease and grace of his reclining posture. Two others, Stokes and Withers, were sitting half up in similar beds, and farther on lay a fourth. It required but one look at the white, rigid, pinched features, and open blindly-staring eyes, to recognise it as the recently-deceased, untended corpse of Etheridge, whom I had frequently seen. Excepting frequent pulls at the black bottles, one of which stood by the side of each of the living men, there was nothing done or said for some time. At last Squibb, happening to look in the direction of the dead body, said with a half shudder: 'Throw a blanket over the face, Harry; it ain't pleasant to look upon,' specially just now.'

'It's a good thing though,' resumed Squibb, after another suck at the brandy bottle—'it's a good thing he's gone. We can be off now without any fear of leaving him to peach upon us. But for that we might have mizzled two or three weeks ago.'

'Ay, Matey,' replied Withers, 'that's true, but I misdoubt Mother White.'

'So do I; but this young fellow here will keep her within bounds. She don't seem to have any notion that we are off to-night.'

'I don't think,' said Withers; and the trio relapsed into silence, broken only by the *glug glug* of the liquor they swallowed, as it glided out of the necks of the bottles down their seasoned and unslakable throats.

Mrs White expected to return with the men in about half an hour; but that time had long past, and still they came not. I was becoming feverishly impatient, when the signal-whistle was heard, instantly replied to by the look-out in the loft above.

'Who can this be?' said Squibb. 'It's not time for Rawlings yet, according to Mrs White.'

The three fellows rose and listened anxiously, and I observed Squibb take a pistol from his belt and cock it.

The look-out man now made his appearance. 'It's only Rawlings,' he said.

'All right!' echoed Squibb, evidently greatly relieved, and returning the pistol to its place.

Presently I heard footsteps approaching by the way I had entered. The only thing apparently now to be done was to sell my life as dearly as I could, and I collected myself in the dark corner where I was shrouded for that purpose. The new-comer stepped briskly up;

and without pausing to look round, made his way over the hay and straw to his friends.

'You are early, Sam,' remarked Squibb. 'White's wife said you would not be here till ten o'clock.'

'I wasn't going to tell her exactly when I was coming or we were going.'

'All right!' interjected Squibb with an approving nod.

'Dick Hessel's boat will be off Luttrell's Folly at twelve o'clock to-night precisely,' added Mr Rawlings.

'That's capital, Sam!' replied the chief of the gang. 'And you, I suppose, mean to shove off with us?'

'That I do indeed. The skipper smells a rat, and I shall be brought up with a round turn when least expected or desired if I don't make myself scarce, now I have an opportunity.'

'I should like to catch that Mr Warneford,' said Squibb with a bitter, venomous accent, and his blood-shot eyes, inflamed with drink, sparkled with deadly ferocity—'I should like to catch that fellow within a couple or so of yards of this little barker'—and he again drew forth and flourished a long pistol—'some fine night with nobody but ourselves within sight or hearing, and if I didn't drill a neat hole through his canister, it would be a pity, that's all.' The other fellows savagely coincided in Squibb's pleasant aspiration.

'It was a bold stroke entering on board the *Rose*,' continued Rawlings; 'but it's getting much too risky now, so that—Hollo!—who's that, I wonder?'

It was a repetition of the signal-whistle, and, judging by the tremulous weakness with which it was given, I guessed by whom. The five fellows—for the look-out had not returned to his perch—became rigid and breathless with eager attention. The whistling was repeated. 'That's Martha White,' said Squibb: 'what but mischief can bring her here again?' He then grasped the little boy, who had been for some time awake, with fierce violence by the hair. 'Dare to whimper,' he said in low, deadly tones, 'or breathe louder than usual—only dare!'

'Lend me a back,' said one of the fellows, 'that I may look out at the window.'

'Hark!' cried Squibb. 'There is some one unlocking the front gate. Who should that be? Look over the stairs, Stokes—quick! quick! By all the devils, if it be, as I suspect, I will blow this imp's brains out whatever be the consequence—quick!' and the ruthless savage held the muzzle of the pistol within six inches of the head of the boy, who seemed dumb with terror.

I hesitated for a moment how to act. To shew myself, and rush upon the scoundrel, would in all probability precipitate the child's fate, Squibb now being at a distance of four or five yards from me. Adopting another expedient, in full reliance upon my oft-tried skill and coolness, I took deliberate aim at the ruffian's head, steadying my arm upon a haytruss, and waiting only to be sure as to who the new-comers were.

'Who is it?' again fiercely demanded Squibb.

'Speak, will you?'

'Betrayed!' shrieked Stokes. 'The coast-guard are upon us!'

As the first syllable left the man's lips I fired. The report was followed by a frightful yell from Squibb. The bullet had struck his right jaw and broken it. He whirled round with the sudden agony, and the pistol in his hand dropped harmlessly on the floor. The next moment all was uproar, confusion, and dismay—the loud shouts of the sailors, the frenzied screams of the woman, and the maledictions of the smugglers, who, after a vain show of resistance, essayed to escape by the way I had entered, mingling in deafening uproar and confusion. They were all secured except Rawlings, who contrived to escape; and very luckily for him that he did so, or unquestionably the reward for

his share in the business would have been an hour's dangle at the yard-arm. The instant I shewed myself Squibb, though frightfully mangled, and for some moments stunned with pain, snatched another pistol from his belt, covered me, fired, missed, and I immediately grappled him. He was a burly, powerfully-framed man, but he was so enfeebled by drink, his recent illness, and present wound, that I pinned him to the floor almost without an effort; and as soon as the bustle was over he was properly secured, and carried off, foaming and blaspheming with rage. Mrs White hugged her child, so fortunately rescued, with convulsive passion, while incoherently pouring forth joy and thanksgiving to Heaven and blessings upon me.

The prisoners were tried and found guilty of the capital charge, Richard White being admitted as approver, but neither of them suffered the extreme penalty of the law. They were all, however, transported—three for life, and the others for varying terms. White and family removed, I believe, to London. They never claimed the reward.

RAMBLÉS IN SEARCH OF WILD-FLOWERS.

A BEAMING July day, which in many an inland place would have been far too hot to admit of exercise, but which was rendered delightful by the invigorating influence of the sea-breeze, was that which I selected for a view of the bogs in their summer beauty; yet although the said sea-breeze had wonderful effect in mitigating the heat of the atmosphere, I thought it wise to keep still during the early hours of the day, and not to start on my expedition until after an early dinner. I also considered that the pleasure of my ramble would be enhanced if I indulged myself with a donkey to take me to the scene of action, so that I might not arrive there fagged and heated by a rather over-long walk, and thereby in some degree unfitted for making the serious attack which I meditated on the treasures of the bog. Behold me, then, at about four o'clock, with my botanical case slung to the pommel of my saddle, and my donkey-boy armed with a basket and trowel, for the purpose of securing any roots I might wish to get, and with my mind full of cheerful visions of coming pleasure, setting forth on my expedition. I chose the shady lanes through Knowle, considering that by so doing we should be less exposed to the rays of the sun, and proposing to return by the heathy hills when the cool air of the evening would be streaming over them.

Our course lay through a succession of true 'Devonshire lanes'; lanes which are so devious, and lead into each other in such a manner that you may not unfrequently, after walking for an hour, find yourself at the very point from which you set out. We, however, were no novices, and made no false turnings. Passing through a deep cut in the red sandstone rock, high banks of which—clothed at intervals with hawthorns and other plants and flowering shrubs, and on which I am told the apple-moss (*Bartramia pomiformis*) grows—rising on each hand, and the sand lying so deep under foot as to make it difficult to get on, we at last entered on a verdant lane, and fell on the course of the most limpid of brooks, some five or six feet wide, along the side of which—but, alas! the side out of our reach—stood a rank of most noble foxgloves (*Digitalis purpurea*), hanging their spotted purple bells over the water, mixed with groups of elegant ferns, some erect, others drooping and feathering the edge of the stream with their graceful verdure, the whole array so beautiful that I

could scarcely turn my eyes from it. And then the scintillations of light which glimmered on the waters as its bustling little waves caught the sunbeams breaking through the leafy trees above added new beauties to the scene; and as each little wave caught the light in its turn, and then hastened on into the deeper shade beyond, yielding the gilded passage to another, which as rapidly passed by, it read me a moral lesson on the fleeting nature of the brightest of earthly honours.

My first discovery of Daleage was merely accidental, for I had never heard that such a place existed. I was riding over the hill, when a sudden turn in the by-road I was pursuing brought the lovely little spot into sight. Just before me lay a small patch of richly-wooded ground, the trees in their full spring verdure, and under their shadow stood a group of picturesque cottages, with all the usual adjuncts of labourers resting at their doors, surrounded by their children—cows assembled for milking, &c. &c. It was quite a Gainsborough scene. Above the little orchard which flanked the cottages lay a sort of petty *tarn*, overhung by beautiful trees. I found, on a nearer view, that this was in fact merely the brook widened, and forming a milldam, around the edges of which wild-flowers had congregated, apparently undisturbed for ages. From this dam flowed the brook whose course I had been following, which, after passing through the village of Budleigh Salterton, eventually joined the sea just opposite my cottage. What a treasure is a clear-flowing brook! From its little spring-head, where the peasant fills his water-can, or waters his flock, on it flows over rock, bog, or plain, through wood and wild, to the fair meadows, which become fairer from its reviving presence. As it widens, it becomes perhaps a harbour for the speckled trout and other fish, which tempts the angler to linger beneath those noble oaks and elms which grace its border; and then it ripples in a slow shallow stream over the pebbles and stones which obstruct its course, forming a pleasant and safe place for the cottage children to dabble with their bare feet, and to swim their little boats. A little farther on it may extend itself into a dam, and turn the mill-wheel, thus benefiting the whole district through which it passes; and after affording to many a rustic family a bountiful supply of that element so needful to life and comfort, on it goes, its banks ever fringed with flowers, and its course marked by its fertilising influences, straight on its appointed course to the river or sea, which is its ultimate destination, exhibiting as it flows a striking emblem of the course of a quiet, healthy-minded Christian, walking in his appointed path, and striving to do good to all around him, his unobtrusive life noticeable only from the marks of usefulness and the kindly charities which flow out on all within the sphere of his influence.

The brook-side and the hill are all a maze of flowers, and the bog a perfect 'paradise of dainty devices.' So I leave Jack, my donkey, to browse among the fern leaves, and in defiance of mud, make my way down to the water's edge. But oh the disappointment I experienced on finding that the flowers which looked so temptingly attainable are all ensconced behind an edge of black bog, mud, and water! There is the beautiful bog-bean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), with its great trefoil leaves, and lovely fringed blossoms by the hundred, all but within reach; but even with the aid of a crooked stick, and advancing till I get such a *tarte* (as Paddy

would say) of the black mud, that further care of my dress is superfluous, I cannot gather them myself! Like Cowper—

'With cane extended, far I sought
To steer them close to land;
But still the prize, though nearly caught,
Escaped my eager hand!'

Alas! no water-spaniel had I to help me to get my water-lily; so making a virtue of necessity, I agreed that George, my donkey-boy, who had long been pressing such a step on my attention, should take off his shoes and stockings, and wade into the mud; and now nothing hindered me from the delight of possession, and large handfuls of the exquisite flower were safely landed, and stowed away in my tin-case. The bog-bean, or marsh-trefoil, as it is sometimes called, is of the natural order *Gentianaceae*, and contains throughout the plant that strong, bitter principle which makes some individuals of this species so valuable in medicine. The menyanthes itself is used among the peasantry, especially in the Highlands, for a tonic decoction, and is also not unfrequently employed as a substitute for hops. The flower is very elegant—its calyx is firm and sturdy, divided into five segments; as is the corolla, which is formed of one petal, and its disk covered with white, threadlike fibres, which look like a most delicate white fringe. The texture of the petal is like that of a lily, and its hue a soft flesh colour, tipped with red. The flowers grow in racemes—that is, numerous flowers, each on a separate footstalk, and arranged on a common flower-stalk—the stem rising from a sheath at the base of the leaf. The leaves are ternate, or divided into three leaflets, which are slightly toothed, and both in colour and texture, though not in form, resembling those of the common broad bean. The flower-stalks rise from ten to fourteen or sixteen inches in height, and the leaf-stalks are nearly as long, but not so upright in their growth. The plants are gregarious; and where they grow at all, they spread freely, forming large groups, the roots being so densely matted as even sometimes to render firm the ground of the bog where they grow. And this fact reminds me, that a little digression on the best means of safely effecting an inroad on a bog may not be amiss, and may save a young beginner in the art of bog-trotting sundry discomfitures. In the first place, then, never on such an expedition wear any attire which it would distress you to get well muddled. In shabby clothes you are above minding such trifles as a stumble or even a downright fall into the mire; but woe to the lady who ventures into a bog in a handsome dress! Her temper and spirits will surely sink even lower than her feet, and all the flowers she may gather will not compensate for her anxiety and loss of composure. Then make it a rule never to plant your foot on any spot which looks tempting, and presents a dainty carpet of moss and sun-dew: be sure that where the pale green and red are most brilliant, and the surface looks the most lovely, there lies below a deep pool of the blackest mud and coldest water, into which your foot will sink to a depth enough to reach your ankle, if not to plunge you forward, so that the other foot will follow the leader, and make you a spectacle to behold! and very likely you will not escape without leaving one of your shoes at least at the bottom of the mire. Now all this may be in a great measure avoided by carrying a good, strong, and long stick in your hand, and testing with it every place whereon you may think of stepping. Then take it as a rule, that those spots where the roots of rushes or ferns have been so long established as to make a sort of bristly hillock, will be safe footing; and if you place one foot on one of these, then, supporting yourself with your stick, draw the other carefully after it, and from thence feel for your next landing-place, you may tra-

verse a great part of a bog, and come in contact with some of its richest treasures, without being much the sufferer; but, with all care, bog-work is and must be dirty work; and the only plan to feel at ease when bent on exploring, is to wear shabby clothes, and be provident enough by carrying with you some clean shoes and stockings, with which, in some cottage or thicket, you may replace your wet ones, to avoid all chance both of cold and discredit.

After we had sufficiently supplied ourselves with the coveted flowers, my boy George and I parted company—he to scour with his bare feet the less accessible parts of the bog, and I to pursue my more modified course how and as I could; whilst Jack, all exultant, enjoyed festival, and cropped the herbage round him. One of my first spoils was a delicate little yellow-blossomed flower, with soft, downy leaves, which was quite new to me. It had rounded leaves and creeping stems about six inches long—the whole plant prostrate and hairy. I found, on my return home, that it was the marsh St John's wort (*Hypericum elodes*), a plant by no means common even in bogs, to which it is entirely confined. The whole tribe of the Hypericineae, of which I hope hereafter to give a general sketch, is very interesting to me; but the *Hypericum elodes*, though on examination evidently a true scion of the stock, does not at first sight seem to bear the characteristic marks of that tribe. One of my next discoveries was the pretty lesser sculcap (*Scutellaria minor*), which though by no means so handsome as its congener, *Scutellaria galericulata*, is an elegant little labiate plant, and by no means common. Its height is from four to six inches, the flowers of a pale-reddish purple, and the lower lip white, dotted with red. The common sculcap grows about a foot high, and the flowers, which are much longer than that of *S. minor*, are of a bright-purplish blue. It is exceedingly pretty. The concave form of the upper lip of both species, which much resembles that of the monk's-hood, seems to have suggested the trivial name, as that member of the corolla would form an elegant little cap or hood for some fairy's head!

I was now again following the course of the fair little brook, which, running from the hills above, trickled over the bog to the milldam—its very clear water imbibing a yellow hue and a brackish taste from the character of the soil which lay below it, and its banks inlaid with mosses, asphodel, bog pimpernel, and other bright flowers; and ever as I stoop to gather one of them, my sense of smell is regaled by the very peculiar, and to me pleasant, odour which rises from the watery earth, and clings to every leaf and flower that I cull from its bosom. Whether this odour proceeds from the earth or the water, or exhales from the plants, I know not: it may be the result of the decaying vegetable matter which lies below. But whatever it is, it pervades the whole ground, and everything gathered in a bog partakes in some measure of it. The evening was now getting on, for much time had been lingered away by the ferny brook, and in other ways; and the sun began to cast deeper and longer shadows from the trees, and the birds to pour forth their even-song of delight in fuller and richer strains; and as I stood there all alone, and surrounded by hills and trees, and water and flowers, I could scarcely refrain from exclaiming—

'Strange! there should be found
Who, self-imprisoned in their proud saloons,
Renounce the odours of the open field
For the unscented fictions of the loom;
Who, satisfied with only pencilled scenes,
Prefer, to the performance of a God,
The inferior wonders of an artist's hand!'

Though close to cottages and their inhabitants, the spot whereon I stood was like a mountain solitude, and long did I stand contemplating it, and neglecting the

main business of the hour—that of collecting. But was I not collecting? I was indeed—not plants, but thoughts! treasures of thought on which to fall back at an aftertime; and pictures—not such as I could hang on my walls, but those which would adorn my mind and memory. I was collecting from the song of birds and the murmur of the water, from the scent of flowers and the beauties of sunshine and shade, of hill, and vale, and tree, rich boards of thought, and grateful remembrance, which have since cheered and refreshed me.

But my reveries were disturbed by George, who came splashing through the morass at full speed with a huge bunch of heterogeneous articles flourished high in air, and his 'Here, ma'am, please what's this? and this?' soon recalled me to my botanical self. Among other things—some of interest, and others worthless—he displayed a noble handful of the beautiful and delicate butterfly orchis (*Habenaria bifolia*). It was not my first introduction to this interesting plant, which is not confined to bogs, but may be found also in woods. But as many of my readers may not know it, and as it grew in this bog in greater profusion than is common, I will venture to give its characteristics; and in so doing I shall be obliged to enlarge a little on those of the whole of that wonderful and curious tribe, the orchideæ.

The leading peculiarity of the orchis tribe is, that its column consists of a stamen, a style, and a stigma, all grown into one solid body. The anther is formed of two vertical cells, in each of which is a mass of pollen; the style is thick and short; and the stigma a shining, moist depression in front, under or between the masses of pollen. The genera vary exceedingly in the structure of the different parts, but in the consolidation of the style and stamen they are agreed, and this forms the characteristic of the orchis tribe. The arrangement of the sepals of the calyx and the petals of the corolla are so very singular as to leave it doubtful to a common observer which is which; and these parts are in many of the species so disposed as to assume the form of some animal or insect. In England we have not above sixteen varieties of the true orchis; but the ophrys, which is of the same natural order, has many of the same peculiarities of form and character—the leading difference between the two genera being, that in the orchis the nectary is elongated into a tubular spur, of which the ophrys is devoid. Many of our most curious insectivorous flowers, which are called orchideæ, belong, in fact, to this genus. The beautiful bee orchis (*Ophrys apifera*), the fly orchis (*Ophrys muscifera*), the late and early spider orchides (*O. arachnites* and *O. aranifera*), and the drone orchis (*Ophrys fucifera*), all of which are more or less rare, belong to the genus ophrys; whilst the monkey, the lizard, and the frog (*Orchis tephrosanthus*, *O. hercina*, and *O. viridis*), belong to the orchis family. The *Aceras antropophora*, or green-man orchis, though closely allied to the orchis, is not one. Its corolla when spread out closely resembles the human form, whence its name. Then there is the elegant little flower *Neottia spiralis*, the 'ladies' tresses,' which also ranks among this extensive tribe: this may be found in August and September, its straight and leafless stem rising abruptly from the earth, with its small, highly-scented flowers, of a greenish hue, disposed on short footstalks spirally along the upper part of the stem. The curious 'listeras,' or 'tway blades,' are congeners, and well deserving notice, as are many others of the tribe, which we cannot now notice specifically, but among which are some of the brightest ornaments of our fields and woods in spring and summer, and also some of the most lusciously-scented of those which regale our sense of smell. In foreign countries the orchis tribe is far more extensive and wonderful than in our own colder climate. In Europe, the species all grow on the ground in meadows or marshes, hills or woods; but in tropical

lands these glorious flowers are seen in all their beauty; and, 'seated on the branches of living trees, or resting among the decayed bark of fallen trees, or running over mossy rocks, or hanging above the head of the admiring traveller, suspended from the arm of some monarch of the forest, they develop flowers of the gayest colours and the most varied forms, and often fill the woods at night with their mild and delicate fragrance.' Humboldt says: 'The orchideæ enliven the clefts of the wildest rocks, and the trunks of tropical trees blackened by excess of heat. This form, to which the vanilla belongs, is distinguished by its bright-green succulent leaves, and by its flowers of many colours and strange and curious shape, sometimes resembling that of winged insects and sometimes that of the birds, which are attracted by the honey vessels. Such is their number and variety, that to mention only a limited district, the entire life of a painter would be too short for the delineation of all the magnificent orchideæ which adorn the recesses of the deep valleys of the Andes of Peru.' Klotzsch reckoned 3545 species of this wonderful family as known at the close of 1848, and doubtless multitudes more have since been discovered. But though this tribe is so varied and attractive in form and scent, it possesses, I believe, but few species which are of the slightest use to man. One is the vanilla, which is used to flavour creams, &c. and which is a pod of a kind which, in the West Indies, creeps like ivy on walls and trees; and there is one other, the shoemaker plant (*Cryptopodium Andersonii*), whose stems afford a gluten which the Brazilians use for sticking thin sheets of leather together. Still, the tribe is most interesting indeed.

The glowing descriptions which we meet with in books of this family of plants would almost be enough to lead one to abandon the comforts of home, and roam in distant lands for the mere purpose of realising such wonders. But even in England it is a glorious tribe. Though many of the species of the orchideous family may be more curious than that of which I first spoke, the *Habenaria bifolia*, there is, I think, none more truly elegant and attractive. By Linneus and others it is called *Orchis bifolia*, but by Hooker and other modern botanists *Habenaria bifolia*. The root of this plant is an undivided tuber tapering downwards; the stem in general from twelve to eighteen inches high, though I have seen it in moist woods exceeding two feet: it has two root-leaves of a long-shaped oval, from between which rises a semitransparent stem, crowned with a long loose spike of large yellowish-green flowers of wax-like texture and very peculiar form. The lip of the nectary is lance-shaped, and not more than half as long as a threadlike tubular spur which hangs down behind the blossom, and gives it its peculiar character. The sepals of the calyx, which are of the same pale-greenish hue as the petals, spread downwards, and the complete corolla has somewhat the form of a small butterfly; its insectivorous appearance is not, however, so marked as that of the fly and bee orchides, some specimens of which might really deceive one into the idea that the blossom was a fly or bee pitched on a stalk. I never see the butterfly orchis without being reminded by it of some tall fair girl, whose growth has overshot her strength, and whose fragile form indicates a fear that she is not long for earth. Another of the characteristics of this sweet flower may tend to carry out the illusion, and happy for the fading girl if it is indeed found in her. When the sun goes down, and the shades of evening descend, this flower throws out from its pale blossom a fragrance so rich and powerful as to pervade the whole air for a considerable distance. So have I seen a fair young creature, when the shades of sickness were spreading round her, and the bright things of earth were fading from her sight, pour out from some hidden source a sort of moral fragrance in the

atmosphere which surrounded her sick couch, making all who breathed it feel that she was more precious to them, and her influence more refreshing to their souls in those twilight hours of existence, than she had ever been in the bright sunlight of her more vigorous life—even as that sweet evening-scented flower has a greater value when its perfumes are poured forth on the night than when its daylight colours delight the eye. And whence comes this sweet influence? Whence the patience, and meekness, and gentleness, the spirit of love and holiness, which, like sweet dropping balms or Eastern gums, thus impregnate the moral atmosphere of the sickbed with soul-subduing fragrance? Surely it can only be from the influence of God's Holy Spirit dwelling in the heart, and imparting to it of the nature of Him whose very name is 'as ointment poured out!'

The rarer kinds of orchis are not to be found near Budleigh Salterton, at least I have never seen any of them there except *Orchis pyramidalis*, which is rare in some places. Those I have found are, *Orchis mascula*, *O. maculata*, *O. morio*, *O. pyramidalis*, *O. latifolia*, and *O. conopsea*. Nor have I found any other of the orchideous family there except the ladies' tresses (*Neottia spiralis*.) The bee orchis abounds on the more western parts of the coast, and I shall not soon forget the delight I have felt in seeing a whole hillside as thickly covered with this beautiful little flower as I have seen fields with cowslips. I had large handfuls gathered for me, and my vases filled with them for two or three succeeding summers, without seeming to lessen the multitudes which sprung up in every direction; but such profusion is not common, a scattered gleaming being all that can be had in any locality I at present know.

Before I left the bog, I found fine specimens of *Alisma ranunculoides*, the lesser water-plantain, with its pale, purple tripetalous blossoms, which is not common, and many other specimens of interest, but, warned by the lengthened shadows, I now bethought me of returning homewards. Setting my boy, therefore, to catch Master Jack, who appeared by no means to relish leaving his pleasant browsing, I retreated to one of the cottages, and after obtaining leave to change my bog-stained shoes and stockings for some dry and clean substitutes which I had brought with me, and obtaining a piece of brown bread and a cup of milk (from the cows whom I had seen assembled for milking) for myself, and another for George, I set forward on my homeward road; but not over the hill, as too much time had been already expended to leave sufficient for me to botanise its heaths and other produce. I therefore return by the lanes, only crossing the little rivulet, which now meets me again. I rejoin the high road at a point a little farther from the village than that at which I had left it; and in so doing I pass a little triangular spot of ground, presenting one of those strangely-arbitrary arrangements which all conversant with the habits of plants occasionally observe. This spot of ground is only separated from the little enclosure where I found the *Equisetum sylvaticum* (as mentioned in a former paper) by a mere belt of wood, and the soil, &c. appears to be exactly of the same character as in that enclosure; yet here, throughout the year, I find scarcely one flower similar to those which grow there: there are in it no orchises nor polygala—neither hyacinths, equisetum, nor potentillas; the only thing which abounds there is the lovely blue forget-me-not (*Myosotis palustris*), a plant wholly unknown to the little enclosure where the above so enamel the ground! These arbitrary arrangements are very common, though to me wholly inexplicable. I have known rich banks of violets in one field, whilst in the next, apparently exactly similar in soil and aspect, not one was to be found; a circuit of fields golden with cowslips, whilst one poor, solitary field lay between, in which not a single root could be found; and so with other flowers. But I linger too long, and the rising moon admonishes me that it is high time to

hasten forward and get home; so, sending Jack into something like a trot, I make my way down the village, now all alive with those just released from business, and seeking the sweet, cool evening air, and arrive safe, though tired, at my cottage door.

EMIGRANT SHIP 'WASHINGTON.'

In describing lately the excellent accommodations on board certain vessels bound for the Canterbury Settlement in New Zealand, we alluded to the wretched treatment occasionally experienced in emigrant ships from Liverpool and other ports to America. It is proper to remove any doubts that may be entertained on this subject. A notion prevails that the government emigration officers—one of whom is stationed at each principal port—protect the interests of passengers, and generally save them from being ill-treated during their voyage. It is nevertheless clear, that in spite of the interference of these functionaries, and also in defiance of strict legal enactments, passengers of a humble class are on many occasions treated with extreme barbarity. It is indeed sickening to reflect on the discomforts, misery, pain, and even premature death, arising from no other cause than the brutality of officers commanding emigrant vessels. Unfortunately, the misconduct of these persons is in some instances beyond the jurisdiction of English law. They sail under a foreign flag, and can be proceeded against only in the courts of their own country: in which case there may be said to be a complete denial of justice; for what emigrant, on arriving at his destination, will take the trouble and be at the expense of waiting months, perhaps years, to prosecute a delinquent skipper?

One of the worst cases of this kind which has come into public notice is that lately detailed in a Return to the House of Commons, ordered 19th February 1851, respecting the emigrant ship *Washington*. Drawing our information from this parliamentary paper, the following is the account of the affair:—

Mr Vere Foster, a person of respectable character, who appears to be engaged in the shipment of emigrants, had heard numerous accounts of the improper treatment of passengers to America, and to satisfy himself as to their truth, took the extraordinary step of becoming himself a steerage passenger in a vessel sailing under the American flag bound for New York from Liverpool. The ship was the *Washington*—a remarkably fine vessel of 1600 tons burthen, with two good passenger decks, each between seven and eight feet high, and well-appointed in every respect. Her crew consisted of thirty-one men, three boys, and five officers—namely, the captain and four mates—and she had on board upwards of 900 passengers, whose sleeping berths were a shelf along each side of the whole length of the two decks, with low boards dividing the shelf into berths all of one size, and each containing from four to six persons. One end of the upper deck was divided off as a separate apartment, containing twelve enclosed cabins, each having two, four, or six berths, and each berth containing two persons. The passengers in this part of the vessel paid a somewhat higher price—namely, L5 instead of L3, 15s. or L4. Mr Foster occupied one of four berths in a cabin of this kind. Each passenger in the ship had a contract-ticket, in which certain provisions were stipulated for, with a supply of water daily, and right of cooking. Some extra provisions, which cost 10s. 6d., were taken on board by Mr Foster and his companions in the cabin. All things being nearly ready for departure, the passengers were inspected by a surgeon, and ordered on board. We shall now allow Mr Foster to tell his own tale, which he does in a letter to Lord Hobart, dated 'Ship Washington, 1st December 1850':—

'All the passengers who arrive at Liverpool a day or more before the sailing of an emigrant ship have to be

inspected by a surgeon appointed by government, who will not allow any one to go on board who has any infectious disease of a dangerous character. I passed before him for inspection, which occupied only one or two seconds. He said without drawing breath: "What's your name? Are you well? Hold out your tongue: all right;" and then addressed himself to the next person. We were again all mustered and passed before him on board the ship while sailing down the river.

'There was no regularity or decency observed with regard to taking the passengers on board the ship: men and women were pulled in, any side or end foremost, like so many bundles. I was getting myself in as quickly and dexterously as I could, when I was laid hold of by the legs and pulled in, falling head foremost down upon the deck, and the next man was pulled down upon the top of me. I was some minutes before I recovered my hat, which was crushed as flat as a pancake. The porters, in their treatment of passengers (naturally), look only to getting as much money as they possibly can from them in the shortest space of time, and heap upon them all kinds of filthy and blasphemous abuse, there being no police regulations, and the officers of the ship taking the lead in the ill-treatment of the passengers.

'The *Washington* went out of dock on the 25th [Oct.], and anchored in the river. I went on board on the next day, and witnessed the first occasion of giving out the daily allowance of water to the passengers, in doing which there was no regularity: the whole 900 and odd passengers were called forward at once to receive their water, which was pumped out into their cans from barrels on deck. The serving out of the water was twice capriciously stopped by the mates of the ship, who, during the whole time, without any provocation, cursed and abused, and cuffed and kicked the passengers and their tin cans; and having served out water to about thirty persons, in two separate times, said they would give no more water out till the next morning, and kept their word. I gently remonstrated with one of the mates, who was cuffing and kicking the poor steerage passengers, observing to him that such treatment was highly improper and unmanly, and that he would save himself a great deal of trouble and annoyance, and win, instead of alienating, the hearts of the passengers, if he would avoid foul language and brutal treatment, and use civil treatment, and institute regularity in the serving out of the water, &c.; but he, in reply, said that he would knock me down if I said another word. I was happy to find, however, that my rebuke had the effect of checking for the moment his bullying conduct.

'Provisions were not served out this day, notwithstanding the engagement contained in our contract-tickets, and notwithstanding that all the passengers were now on board, the most of them since yesterday, and had no means of communication with the shore, and that many of them, being very poor, had entirely relied upon the faithful observance of the promises contained in their tickets, the price of which includes payment for the weekly allowance of provisions.

'While a steamer towed the *Washington* down the river on Sunday, 27th October, all the passengers were mustered on deck, and answered to their names as they were called over by the chief clerk of the agency-office at Liverpool. This formality was for the purpose of ascertaining that there was no one on board but such as had tickets. One little boy was found hid, having made his way on board, thinking to escape notice: he was sent ashore. On the 28th we were so fortunate as to have a most favourable breeze, which carried us out of the Irish Channel, being that part of the voyage in which we expected the greatest delay.

'On the 29th I went the round of the lower deck with the surgeon of the ship, observing him take down the numbers in each berth. These berths are constructed

to hold four persons, and would conveniently hold five persons; some of the berths had four persons in them, and some as many as six. I observed that the doctor noted down in many instances persons between the ages of fourteen and sixteen as under fourteen—that is, as not adults, although it is expressly stated in our tickets that fourteen years of age constitutes an adult, and any one above that age is paid for extra as such. This was for the purpose of making a saving in the issuing of provisions, as half rations only are served out to passengers under fourteen years of age. The doctor remarked to me at the time, that as regarded the issuing of provisions, sixteen years of age was considered on board the *Washington* as constituting an adult.

'On the 30th October no provisions had yet been served out, and the complaints of the poorer passengers in the steerage were naturally increasing, as they had no means of living, excepting on the charity of those who had brought extra provisions. [At the request of the passengers Mr Foster drew up a letter to the captain, representing the ill-treatment from want of provisions. This letter, however, only produced a few savage words in reply, and the writer of it was called a rascal and a pirate for interfering. At length, on the 31st of October, provisions were issued; and Mr Foster, on weighing various rations, found them deficient.]

'On Saturday, 2d November, groceries were issued for the first instead of the second time to the passengers: the six persons in my cabin received all their provisions together. We got 6 oz. of tea instead of 12 oz.; nearly our proper allowance of sugar; and 1½ lb. of molasses instead of 3 lbs.; and no vinegar. We have as yet received no pork, though we should have received our second weekly allowance of pork to-day.

'On Thursday, 7th November, flour, biscuits, oatmeal, and rice were issued in the same proportion as before, excepting that the flour was a little under the allowance. I was looking on during nearly the whole of the time, and could see that the quantities were the same to each person. The six persons in my cabin received—8 lbs. of oatmeal instead of 30 lbs.; 8 lbs. of flour instead of 6 lbs.; 8 lbs. of rice instead of 12 lbs.; 8½ lbs. of biscuits instead of 15 lbs.

'On Saturday, the 9th November, an allowance of pork was issued for the first instead of the third time: the six persons in my cabin got 6 lbs. When one of the occupants of berth No. 180 came up for his pork, not knowing that another man from the same berth had just received for the whole of its occupants, the first mate instantly ran at him, and hit him with his clenched fist, and with a rope's end, about the face and head, and then added: "If any other — annoys me, —, I'll smash his head for him!" Whenever provisions are served out, a sailor stands by with a rope's end, and capriciously lays about him, with or without the slightest provocation. The captain never appears to trouble himself in the slightest degree about the passengers, nor even ever to visit the part of the ship occupied by them. The first and second mates, the surgeon, and the man specially appointed to look after the passengers, and the cooks—all these very seldom open their lips without prefacing what they may have to say with horrible oaths.

'I hear occasionally some of the passengers complain to the first mate or to the captain of the favouritism shewn by the passengers' cooks to those who give them money or whisky, and who consequently get five or six meals cooked daily, while those poor passengers who have not the money to give, or who do not give, are kept the whole day waiting to have one meal cooked, or can have only one meal cooked every second day. In my own case, on one of the first mornings of my being on board, the cook took up my kettle of water, which had been waiting one hour and a half to be put on the fire, and said to me: "What are you going to give me to cook that for you?" I replied

that I intended to take my chances the same as the rest of the passengers, and was contented to take my proper turn in having my victuals cooked, for that if I paid for a preference in having them cooked, I should be monopolising a right which is common to us all at the expense of those fellow-passengers who were not able to pay. The cook then put down the kettle again, saying: "That — fellow is not going to pay up, so his kettle may wait." The captain's cook cooks for those passengers who give him 10s. or 12s. each person for the voyage, and a great many do so. I did not, for I wished to place myself as much as I conveniently could in the same position as the general run of my fellow-passengers. I find now, that either in consequence of good words in my favour from some of those passengers whom I have had small opportunities of being of service to, or in consequence of an appreciation of my fairness in taking my proper turns—though I am well able to pay for doing otherwise—or of my aiding him by remonstrances to keep the galley (kitchen) from being too crowded, and to keep order, the cook now favours me as much as if I did pay him. Asked the third mate where we were, and received the same reply as usual—that he could not tell. No one knows the whereabouts of the vessel except the captain and first mate, and they keep that a profound secret from the ship's company and passengers. No groceries were issued, as they should have been this day.

'13th November.—I have spoken frequently with different sailors, asking them if this was the first time of their sailing in this ship. All answer yes, and that it will be the last; and some of them express an opinion that the first and second mates will get a good thrashing at New York.

'14th.—Provisions of oatmeal, biscuit, flour, and rice, were issued this day as usual. I weighed what was given to four adults and a boy occupying one of the steerage berths. They received 10½ lbs. of oatmeal instead of 22½ lbs. due; 4½ lbs. of biscuits instead of 11½ lbs. due; 4 lbs. of flour instead of 4½ lbs. due; 5½ lbs. of rice instead of 9 lbs. due.

'17th.—I heard the doctor say: "There are a hundred cases of dysentery in the ship, which will all turn to cholera; and I swear that I will not go amongst them: if they want medicines, they must come to me!" This morning the first mate took it into his head to play the hose upon the passengers, drenching them from head to foot; the fourth mate did the same a few mornings ago.

'18th.—A three-masted vessel in sight, going in the same direction as ourselves; this is the second vessel only that we have seen since leaving Liverpool. About noon a heavy squall came on, which split the fore-top-sail and staysail.

'A delicate old man, named John McCorcoran, of berth No. 111, informed me that on Sunday last he had just come on deck, and, after washing, was wringing a pair of stockings, when the first mate gave him such a severe kick as he was stooping, that he threw him down upon the deck.

'A passenger, having a family with him, told me that one of the first days after coming on board the doctor applied to him for a present, saying, that of course he was paid for his services to the passengers, but that to those persons who liked to give him anything, of course he should pay more particular attention: the passenger then gave him 2s. 6d. He applied in the same manner to Mr Homer, of cabin No. 8, who gave him 1s. The doctor then said: "And there was that glass of castor oil of the other day, for which you owe me 6d.," which Mr H. then gave him. The doctor has no right to charge for any medicines, but has, I am told, received a great deal of money on board in the same way. The first mate beat one of the sailors severely this evening with a rope.

'21st.—A violent gale commenced this evening.

'22d.—The gale became perfectly terrific; for a few minutes we all expected momentarily to go to the bottom, for the sea, which was foaming and rolling extremely high, burst upon the deck with a great crash, which made us all believe that some part of the vessel was stove in. The wave rushed down into the lower deck, and I certainly expected every moment to go down. Some of the passengers set to praying; the wind blew a perfect hurricane, so that it was quite out of the question to attempt to proceed on our proper course. We therefore scudded before the wind, having up the main-top-sail close reefed and the fore-top-sail staysail only. The water which had rushed upon the deck remained there to the depth of several feet; it was got rid of by breaking holes in the bulwarks with a hatchet. The whole sea was a sheet of foam. Towards nine p.m. the gale began to be less, though still violent, and moderated during the night.

'25th.—Another child, making about twelve in all, died of dysentery from want of proper nourishing food, and was thrown into the sea sewn up, along with a great stone, in a cloth.

'We passed some ships' spars this and the following day, belonging perhaps to vessels which may have suffered in the late gale.

'26th.—Tea and sugar issued to those who lost any during the late storm. I and my two mess-companions received our allowances together, receiving between us 2 oz. of tea and ½ lb. of sugar.

'30th.—The doctor came down to the second cabin in company with the first mate; and to display his authority, drew himself up and swelled himself out excessively tremendous, roaring out: "Now, then, clean and wash out your rooms every one of you!" adding the most horrible oaths.

'2d December.—A beautiful day and a favourable breeze; took a pilot on board.

'Many of the passengers have, at different times during the voyage, expressed to me their intention of making a public complaint respecting their ill-treatment on board this ship; so, to meet their wishes, I wrote a few lines, which were signed this evening by 128 persons.

'3d.—A few of the passengers were taken ashore to the hospital at Staten Island, and we arrived alongside the quay at New York this afternoon. The 900 passengers dispersed as usual among the various fleecing-houses, to be partially or entirely disabled for pursuing their travels into the interior in search of employment.

'6th.—I met this day with some friends of mine, who came out two months ago in the *Atlas*, with 415 passengers. They describe the treatment of the passengers on board that vessel by the officers as considerably worse than what I have related respecting the *Washington*.

'I have since met with passengers whom I sent out in the *Washington* on her previous voyage, and I learn from them that no provisions were served out during the first fortnight of her voyage, and that no meat was served out during the whole of her voyage: I have also met with passengers whom I sent in the *Wm. Rathbone*, whose treatment by the officers and as regards provisions was similar. It is one of the same line of packets.

'Here follows a comparison of the provisions due, and the provisions received by each passenger during our voyage of thirty-seven days, shewing a great deficiency.'

The foregoing statement, as has been said, formed the subject of a letter to Lord Hobart, the writer of it remaining in the meanwhile in America. Lord Hobart transmitted Mr Foster's letter to the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, who instituted inquiries at Liverpool through the government emigration officer at that port. The result, as it appears, was—that there could be no redress. Legal proceedings against the captain of the *Washington* at New York had been con-

tempted by Mr Foster; but he was dissuaded, on account of the delay and expense of doing so. Under these circumstances, the commissioners apprehend that nothing now can be done until at least the arrival of Mr Foster in England; and even if he should then be prepared to take proceedings against the officers of the ship, it seems very doubtful whether any English court would have jurisdiction in the matter.

Supposing Mr Foster's statement to be correct—and we have seen no cause to doubt its accuracy—it is evident that the humbler class of emigrants on board certain vessels are exposed to the grossest misusage without the slightest practicable remedy in law. On this account the press can but do its duty in spreading a knowledge of the fact, and in recommending emigrants to exercise all reasonable caution in arranging for their passage. One thing more might possibly be done: at each principal port a number of respectable and benevolently-disposed persons might form themselves into an association to investigate the trustworthiness of advertisements addressed to emigrants, and to recommend no emigrant to make an engagement with any shipping concern without previously communicating with the association. Some such organisation might perhaps bring refractory and selfish skippers to their senses.

SNAKES AND SNAKE-CATCHERS.

THE snake with its tail in its mouth, in Egypt a symbol of eternity, is in India a simple fact. In that country the circle embraces both heaven and earth; it sweeps through the whole mythology, from Mahadeo, the god of the Serpent, and Doorga, his consort, decked with coils of snakes instead of chains and jewels, to the hundred-headed snake who bears the lord of the universe, and the monster whose task it is to churn the waters of immortality. This mythological series descends upon the mountains and forests to the north of India, where it becomes the Dhorah—a mighty reptile fifteen feet long, and thick in proportion, which our Old Indian has seen carried on the shoulders of several men in procession. Thence rolls the serpent-fold, in every kind of variety, over the fields and gardens, through the houses, in the bath, in the scullery and store-room, in the very bed, till it comprehends the whole circle of Hindoo life.

Well do I remember, quoth she, the commotion which the finding of a small snake's skin occasioned in our family circle. We children—alas! I was then a child—could not enough admire its transparent texture, the regularity of its scales, and its smooth and glossy appearance; and our wonder increased as we observed how dexterously the skin must have been slipped off, just as Juliet might have withdrawn from her smooth hand the glove that Romeo wished to be. Thus uninjured the shining skin lay before us—a small slit alone indicating where the wearer of this beautiful integument had crept out. After our excitement and admiration had somewhat abated, I perceived my dear old father's countenance become somewhat clouded.

'Miaghan,' cried he at last to the servant in waiting, 'call Hurreckchund Baboo; an intelligent individual, who was often taken into our cabinet councils, and who was much esteemed for his urbanity and uprightness. 'Well, Baboo,' said my father, as soon as the old man made his appearance, 'do you know that I am harbouring a snake and these children under the same roof?'

'How is that, Sahib?' said the Baboo; 'this must have come to pass very recently.'

'Well, look at this skin; it was found early this morning before the door of our sitting-room. You know we constructed flues last year under the room to render it dry, and put bars before the open cavities to prevent vermin from taking possession of them; and

now I see two of the bars have disappeared—a fact which, taken in connection with the appearance of the skin, is a sufficient proof that a serpent must have got in. I wish you to advise me how to get the intruder captured and killed.'

'Sahib,' replied the Baboo, 'I could do that readily enough; but allow your old servant, a worshipper of Sheeva, to intercede for an animal he holds sacred. I see very well that this is the skin of a kurait, comparatively a harmless snake. It has no stamp of the spectacles on its nose. That snake, Sahib, will prove a good genius: he came to seek your protection, and has laid his skin at your door to tell you so. Take me as bail for once, and rest assured that, instead of doing you harm, he will clear your room of those disgusting toads and frogs which sometimes jump upon your feet at dusk, and will devour the mice which eat Missy Baba's gingerbread, and kill also the musk-rats, of which she has such a horror.'

'Oh, papa!' cried I, looking imploringly in my father's face; 'think of those horrid musk-rats that go shrieking like evil spirits at night through our bedrooms, and spoil everything in our pantry and cellars—even the wine, which is carefully sealed with wax and rosin! Let us by all means leave the serpent alone, to deal with them as he pleases.' My father could not help smiling.

'Well, Baboo,' said he, 'I will for once take your bail, and also allow Christina's eloquent appeal to soften my heart—so let the snake live.'

We neither heard nor saw anything more of the intruder for about twelve months, but found, as the Baboo had prognosticated, a vast diminution in all the vermin kind; when another skin, prettier than the former, but nearly double its size, was found laid upon the same spot. The Baboo was sent for again in a hurry.

'Ah Sahib,' said he, addressing my dear father, 'my good genius, I fear, is now about to take his departure. He is grown restless, and is gone to seek for a partner; and as his old skin was grown painfully tight, he has slipped it off by making a rent on the top of his head. See how ingeniously he has hooked it against that slight roughness on one of those little iron bars.'

'I am glad,' said my father, 'to hear that you think the snake has taken his departure. We shall say no more about him then, and I shall have those bars replaced, to prevent any of his congeners from getting into his lodgings.'

This was done, and snakes were almost forgotten, except at such times as we looked at our pretty cast-off skins, until one morning our poulterer made his appearance with a woful countenance and a low salaam.

'Khodawund,' said he, folding his hands, 'the pigeons will not come down from their perches to-day to eat, and the rabbits have hidden themselves in their hutches.'

'And what is that owing to, my good man?' asked my father.

'Khodawund, I suppose a snake must have frightened them last night, and if you order an investigation, the sheitan (satan)—for the poulterer was a Mohammedan—will be found lurking about the premises. Suppose we get a real snake-catcher, and not one of those pagie (mean fellows), with their gourd flutes, and have peace restored in my department?'

'By all means,' replied my father; and a *bona fide* snake-catcher soon made his appearance.

Black as a coal was the skin, frizzled, woolly, and crisp the hair, and flat and ill-favoured the countenance of this Bugdee, obviously a man of the lowest caste. Such countenances are found in all the ancient Hindoo excavations, and they grin and goggle from the shoulders of all the gigantic idols of olden time. The present olive-coloured, straight-haired Hindoo seems to be of a different race from the excavators of the

first temples, and the chisselers of the first graven images.

The snake-catcher came, provided with two implements, which served the same purposes as a spade and crowbar, although of rude manufacture. He seemed to set about his business in a very scientific manner. He inspected the ground all about him very carefully, looked if there were any traces of a creeping thing upon it, pried into every hole he came to, took a little of the earth in the palm of his hand, and even tasted the loam and smelled it. At last having come before a larger hole than we had yet seen, the entrance of which was very smooth, and looked as if some slimy stuff had dried upon it, he paused, and said:

'Sir, here we shall find the snake.'

'What is to be done now?' asked my father.

'We must dig, sir, if you have no objection.'

My father had none, and as he was anxious to have the enemy caught, operations were begun immediately. The hole was considerably widened, and after the man had dug about three feet deep, sure enough an immense gokhoorah (cobra de capella) was seen coiled up.

'Oh,' said the man, 'there he is! I know from his beautiful purple coat, shining scales, and his whole appearance, that he is the dhemorah (the gentleman snake). Now, shall I seize him?'

As soon as he had uttered these words the snake, as if understanding to what his discourse tended, spread out his frightful head, with the well-known marks of spectacles, and made a dart at the man with his beak-like mouth. The Bugdee avoided the dart, watched his opportunity, and seized the snake by the back of the neck, upon which the monster coiled itself in many folds round and round his muscular arm.

'That water-jar—quick, quick!' cried the man. 'This fellow will paralyse my limbs. Away with him into the pot! I may not slay him, for if I did the gods would never allow me to capture another.' The snake disappeared in the pot, the mouth of the vessel was covered firmly with a piece of cloth, and a stone fitted close upon it.

'Now,' said the man, 'we shall dig a little farther, and no doubt discover the female, and find also either her eggs or her young.'

And so it proved. A few strokes with the spade brought the female snake to light. She was of a much paler colour than the male, and not nearly so large. Having had a good feast on the pigeons during the night, she was rather sluggish, and sat brooding upon three eggs almost asleep. The snake-catcher pounced upon her as he did upon the other without much ceremony; and having squeezed her so tightly by the neck as to make her open her jaws, he displayed to us her horrible fangs. The eggs were of a dirty white colour; and upon being broken, they exhibited the same bloodshot appearance as a hen's when they have been sat upon for a time. We had scarcely flattered ourselves with so much success; so the Bugdee was handsomely rewarded, and dismissed, after he had obliterated all the traces of his, to us, wonderful feat.

'And now,' said my father, 'to-morrow, my dear girls, we shall see what those mock snake-catchers can do. The mourg-wallah (poulterer) will bring us to-morrow one of the ogres with the gourd flutes.'

At ten o'clock, accordingly, the magician made his appearance. I could not but be struck by his savage looks, matted hair, ochre-stained dress, and the hieroglyphics of red and white paint which were neatly and carefully drawn on his forehead and arms. He looked wildly about, and asked if salih had sent for him.

'To be sure I have,' was the reply: 'but what have you got there?'—pointing to his basket.

He lifted the cover with a curl of the lip. 'An empty basket of course,' was his reply.

'And are you alone?' asked my father again; 'and have you no snakes hidden about you?'

'I despise all human aid,' growled he, raising himself to his full height; 'and as for snakes, examine the fakeer's dress, and be convinced.'

But this was not done, for we saw we had offended the man; and my father contented himself with telling him in a conciliating voice to begin his work. And this was done by blowing a long protracted blast upon his flute, to the music of which we all marched towards the palanquin shed. There we came to a stand-still, and the magician said: 'Here, assuredly, is a snake: will you hear him?' We of course assented, but at the same time laughed at the idea of hearing a snake. Whether the work of ventriloquism or not, however, we certainly did hear something like the tones of the landrail. The man then stooped, took up a handful of dust, and assuming, if possible, a more savage air than he had before displayed, gave out some mysterious incantation which no doubt was in Sanscrit. I shuddered, but could only distinguish the word *bunsam*, which means 'denizen of the wood.' As soon as this incantation was finished came a sort of 'crick—crick—crick!' The magician now began to wave his body, shake his head, and play on his flute what he fancied a most seductive blast, till, directing our attention to a heap of boards, we did actually see a pair of fiery eyes, and a sharp, forked, protruding tongue. The snake came forth by degrees, and advanced nearer and nearer to the sound of the flute, till his charmer, with great dexterity, seized him, and deposited him in the basket. Two other snakes were caught in nearly the same manner, the last being minus an eye, which of course attracted our notice.

'Snakes,' said the man, 'although they wound and slay other animals, are vulnerable themselves, and, even like man, they have their feuds and their enemies; for instance, the kite, the stork, and the subtle little neulah.'

We allowed him to slip all he captured into his basket, for not a scale of the snakes would he allow to be injured; and having handsomely rewarded him, we gave him leave to depart. Then only our magician became gracious, and he presented my father with a little greenish stone, which he assured him was a sovereign remedy against the bite of the snake.

'And now, sage mohunt,' said my father, 'as you are about to depart for ever, reveal unto us whether this be not all glamour? Have you not in some way contrived to deceive our senses?'

The magician grinned horrible a ghastly smile while he replied: 'If I have, I have done it cleverly; and no one is bound to bear witness against himself.'

We heard the next day that he had been at our missionary minister's, at the schoolmaster's, and at the music-master's, and that at each of the places he had caught three snakes, one of which was always *minus an eye*!

TELEGRAPH OF THOUGHT.

THREE literary productions have been sent to us this week from countries far apart—one from Italy, one from China, and one from New Zealand, which have all, we think, strong claims upon the interest of our readers.

The appearance at Florence of a new Italian journal called the 'Rivista Britannica,' appears to us to be a circumstance peculiarly worthy the attention of those who watch with interest the social progress of nations.* The object of this journal is to transfuse English thought into the veins of Italian society, with the view of promoting a freer and healthier circulation. The result sought after is not proposed to be obtained by

* Rivista Britannica, Giornale Mensuale, raccolta di Articoli tratti dalle migliori pubblicazioni Inglesi. Fascicolo I. Firenze: Tipografia Italiana, 1851.—[The British Review, a Monthly Journal, composed of Articles from the best English publications. London Agent, F. Rolandi, Berners Street.]

translating books, but articles—by sending through the Italian mind that common current of reflection and information which is the very life of the English intellect. In the introduction the editors, one bearing an Italian, the other a Scottish name—the Chevalier Sebastiano Fenzi and James Montgomery Stuart—remark, that England alone has been exempt from the almost general fate of Europe—to struggle for freedom—to seem to win the fight for a moment—and then to fall back, having gained nothing more than a shadow. It seems to them that the achievement of liberty is useless without the capacity to enjoy it in an orderly manner; and that the best preparation Italy can make is to study the popular literature of a nation possessing so eminently this capacity, and offering so excellent a *point d'appui* for those who would develop the elements of Italian society.

Under these convictions, they propose that the new journal shall be composed of such translations from English periodicals as will give a faithful reflection of the existing state of art, science, literature, and social life in England; and they invite the sympathy and support of the Italian public to an undertaking which they believe will not only furnish a useful and agreeable volume, but serve to correct prejudices and remove antipathies. Their materials will consist of narratives, articles on physical and natural science, machinery, &c.; travels and geographical sketches, literature and art, &c.; besides an original review of English works relating to Italy. The contents of the first fasciculus now before us are as follows:—'Adventures in the Fiord,' by Harriet Martineau; 'Terrestrial Magnetism,' from Chambers's Edinburgh Journal; 'Foreign Reminiscences of the late Lord Holland,' from the Edinburgh Review; Herschel's 'Siberia and California,' from the Quarterly Review; and a review of Ogilvy's 'Traditions of Tuscany,' in verse, with poetical translations of the extracts.

This undertaking we think is worthy of all encouragement; and we are quite of the opinion expressed by the editors, that a free interchange of thought is still more important than a free commercial intercourse between nations.

The second work alluded to is published at Ningpo. It is of a narrow folio size, neatly stitched as a pamphlet, with a thin cover of yellow silk. It is entitled the 'Philosophical Almanac,' by D. J. Macgowan, M.D., and is printed in Chinese, with numerous diagrams, in the 46th year of the 75th cycle of sixty, or 4488, being the 1st year of the reign of H. I. M. Hien Fung.

The main object of the work is to communicate to the Chinese a knowledge of the principles of the electric telegraph; and as an introduction to the subject—necessary to them—there are added essays on electricity, galvanism, and magnetism. But this indoctrination has no reference to the establishment of an electric communication with Peking; the benefit it seeks is intellectual, not physical; and the fluid of thought it conveys is intended to awaken the Chinese mind from the torpor of ages.

To this ancient people their ancestors are deities, to whom they pay divine honours; and it is necessary to prove to them that in the course of the last 2000 years the world has learned something, and that we of these last days are in some respects wiser than Confucius. This must be the foundation of all teaching in China, where at present it is unlawful for the human mind to advance one jot beyond the wisdom of their ancestors. The decomposing power of the galvanic battery is explained, the author tells us, 'for the purpose of showing the fallacy of so much of the philosophy and mythology as is connected with the theory of the five elements: reference being also made to facts in astronomy, optics, chemistry, and anatomy, which in like manner scatter to the winds their notions relative to planets, colours, metals, and viscera, of which the

Chinese enumerate five each.' The work, it will be seen, is conceived in a wise and healthy spirit, and if even tolerable in the execution, Dr Macgowan will deserve well of China and of mankind.

The third literary production is the first number of an English newspaper, published under peculiar circumstances at the antipodes. In September last, our readers are aware, four emigrant ships sailed from this country with the view of founding the Canterbury Settlement in New Zealand. It was late in December before these pilgrim fathers arrived at their destination—an uninhabited bay surrounded by a desert; but here, on the 11th of the ensuing month—before twenty human habitations were in existence—appeared the 'Lyttleton Times,' a well-printed paper of twenty-four columns folio, with its page of advertisements, its leading article, its notices to correspondents, its shipping news, its local intelligence, its poets' corner, its market prices, and its police report. Formerly, it used to be said that wherever the English went, the first thing they did was to establish a tavern; now we have changed all that—the chief necessary is a newspaper, and the stirring character of the age demands, above all things, expression. We wish every success to the 'Lyttleton Times,' and to the settlement of which it aspires to be the organ.

CŒUR-DE-LION'S STATUE.

A COLOSSAL EQUESTRIAN BRONZE FIGURE, BY THE SCULPTOR MAROCHETTI; NOW PLACED OUTSIDE THE GREAT EXHIBITION IN HYDE PARK.

RICHARD THE LION-HEARTED! crown'd serene
With the true royalty of perfect man;
Seated above the blessing or the ban
Of half-articulate crowds that gaping lean
To trace what the out-of-date word 'king' may mean.
See there! What needs that iron casque's star-rim,
Defined against the sky, to signal him
A monarch—of those monarchs which have been
And age not! Read his mission'd destinies
In the full brow majestic, kingly eyes;
The strong, still hands, each grasping rein or sword;
The mouth in very sternness beautiful;
Behold a man who his own soul can rule!
Lord o'er himself—therefore his brethren's lord.

'O Richard! O mon roi!' So minstrels sighed;
The many-centuried voice dies faint away
In silence of the ages dim and gray.
We know not but those green-wreath'd legends hide
A coarse, foul truth, that soon had crumbling died
Beneath our modern times' serene air.
What matter! Giant statue, rest thou there!
Shadowing our Richard of chivalric pride;
Or if not the true Richard, still the type
Of the old regal glory, fallen, o'er ripe,
To rot amid the world's new blossoming.
Stand! imaging those lost heroic days,
Until our children's children come and gaze,
Whispering with reverent awe: 'This was a king!'

A NICE SUMMER DRINK.

Before my departure from Mecon, I supped in the large room of the hotel. I had frequently observed the singular mixtures which many of the Americans make at their meals; I here observed that a gentleman, after calling for a glass of milk, deliberately shook a portion of the contents of the pepper-box into it, and having added a teaspoonful of salt, stirred the whole together, and drank it. There is certainly no accounting for taste, but this, among all the strange compounds which I met with in the United States, was the most extraordinary.—*Colonel Cunynghame's Glimpse at the Western Republic.*

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